

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPC-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-10 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7136

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE WELLINGTON 2435

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, ETRD, NZ

SUBJECT: US/NZ ECONOMIC BILATERALS

REF: A. WELLINGTON 1106; B. STATE 91982; C. WELLINGTON 2335

1. SUMMARY: SECRETARY OF TREASURY HENRY LANG
RAISED WITH ME ON SEPT 12 QUESTION OF TIME AND
VENUE OF THE NZ/US BILATERAL ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS.
HE IS QUITE RELAXED BUT WOULD LIKE TO HAVE MEETING
IN WELLINGTON. SUGGESTS EARLY OCTOBER BUT IS QUITE
FLEXIBLE AS TO DATES PROVIDED IT IS NOT BETWEEN
DECEMBER 15 AND JANUARY 15 WHEN ALL NEW ZEALANDERS
ON HOLIDAY. END SUMMARY.

2. I AM AWARE THAT AMBASSADOR WHITE HAS BEEN
PRESSING THIS MATTER IN WASHINGTON. DEPARTMENT OF
TRADE AND INDUSTRY PEOPLE HAVE EARLIER RAISED
QUESTION WITH EMBASSY ECONOFF (SEE REF A). DEPUTY
SEC FONAFF NORRISH SHOWED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN
IT YESTERDAY. LANG RAISED IT TODAY.

3. RECENTLY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN SECRETARY
WHO ARE PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN POLITICAL MATTERS
HAVE BEEN PRESSING ME ON QUESTION OF ANOTHER INTERNATIONAL
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MEETING IN WELLINGTON BUT HAVE SHOWN LESS

INTEREST IN VENUE AND TIME OF US/NZ ECONOMIC TALKS.
(SEE PARA 9 REF C). I POINTED OUT TO LANG AS
I HAD EARLIER TO NORRISH, THAT PROBABLY THE MOST USEFUL
TALKS WHICH NZ AND US COULD HAVE WOULD BE ON GATT
STRATEGY IN TERMS OF SELLING AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES.
HE AGREED ABSOLUTELY. I SUGGESTED THAT THESE CONVERSATIONS
COULD BE CARRIED ON BY GATT EXPERTS AT
TOKYO OR ELSEWHERE. I POINTED OUT THAT ECONOMIC
BILATERALS IF HELD IN WASHINGTON WOULD MAKE IT EASIER
FOR US TO MAKE AVAILABLE FOR TALKS NOT ONLY PERSONS
OF HIGH RANK BUT ALSO EXPERTS IN ANY SPECIALIZED
ECONOMIC FIELD WHICH MIGHT INTEREST NZ. (REF B).

4. LANG DID NOT FEEL THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF EXPERTS
WOULD BE NECESSARY. HE FELT THAT THE TALKS WERE
IMPORTANT AND THAT A SMALL GROUP COULD HAVE VERY
SATISFACTORY TALKS FROM GNZ POINT OF VIEW. HE
MENTIONED BY NAME ASSISTANT SECRETARY WILLIS C.
ARMSTRONG. IN BRIEF, LANG FELT THE TALKS WERE
IMPORTANT, WAS FLEXIBLE ABOUT DATES, BUT HAD
CONSIDERABLE FEELING THAT THEY SHOULD BE HELD IN NZ
SINCE IT HAD BEEN AGREED THAT THE VENUE OF THE TALKS
WOULD ALTERNATE BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND WELLINGTON.
WILL BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER FURTHER WHEN
IN WASHINGTON.

5. COMMENT: WHILE PM KIRK HAS BEEN PRIMARILY
INTERESTED IN POLITICAL AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, NZ
INFLATION HAS CAUSED HIM FOCUS SHARPLY ON ECONOMIC
MATTERS. HE PRESIDED AT ALL MEETINGS LEADING TO
RECENT DECISION TO REVALUE. IN EFFECT, ECONOMIC
TALKS WILL BECOME MORE IMPORTANT TO GNZ.
WOOD

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